

Setting up of more community Radio Station by AIR

1708. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of community Radio Stations set-up, by the AIR (Prasar Bharati)/Government as on 31 st October, 2006, State-wise;

(b) whether Government have decided recently to set up more Radio Stations in the country; and

(c) if so, the number of stations, proposed to be set up during the current financial year 2006-07, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) 5 Community Radio Stations have been set up by AIR (2 in Meghalaya, 2 in Nagaland and 1 in Mizoram).

(b) and (c) AIR has no further proposal for community radio stations. However, the Government has liberalized the policy for grant of permission for setting up community radio stations to 'Non-Profit' organizations viz. Civil Society and Voluntary organizations, State Agricultural Universities, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Registered Societies and Autonomous bodies and Public Trusts registered under Societies Act or any other such act relevant for the purpose in addition to the educational institutions. The guidelines are available on the Ministry's website, www.mib.nic.in.

Huge expenditure by AIR and Doordarshan

1709. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that All India Radio and Doordarshan incurs huge expenditure but their listenership/viewership are much less and completely disproportionate to their expenditure;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by Government to decrease the expenditure on these organizations, make them economically self reliant and to increase their listenership/viewership;

(c) whether there is any proposal to have one powerful radio station of

All India Radio for every regional language instead of multitude of small radio stations, which results into huge expenditure; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati being the premier public service broadcaster in the country, does not work purely on commercial considerations. The earning of commercial revenue is not the only objective of the organization, but is only incidental to its activities, which are never viewed in terms of profit and loss or income versus expenditure. However, the listenership/viewership of AIR/DD is showing consistent increase year after year.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, through Satellite DTH, 20 channels of AIR cover the entire country except Andaman and Nicobar.

Loss of young Indian sailors

1710. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thirty young Indian sailors lost their lives in various accidents in high seas since 2005;

(b) if so, the details of shipping companies with whom these sailors were working;

(c) whether Government have taken a view of the report that thirteen such sailors lost their lives in mysterious circumstances within twenty days;

(d) whether Government are aware of the apprehensions expressed by their family members about the alleged foul play by the shipping syndicate;

(e) whether Government have investigated into such apprehensions, if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?